

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The following is a complete listing of claims in this application.

Claims 1-10 (canceled).

11. (previously presented) In an orthodontic application comprising, in the mouth of a patient, a bracket system surrounding a molar tube, with an arch end projecting from a distal end of a molar tube, the improvement comprising an oral mucous membrane protector comprising:

a protective element constructed and arranged to cover or envelop the end of the arch; and

fixing means integrally joined to and extending from the protective element and fixed to the bracket system surrounding the molar tube behind flaps thereof at the height of the arch,

the protector isolating mucous membranes susceptible of being damaged inside the mouth.

12. (currently amended) ~~A protector~~ An application according to claim 11, wherein the protective element is a cap constructed and arranged for covering the end of the arch, and the fixing means comprises an elastic ring integral with and extending from the protective element.

13. (new) An application according to claim 11, wherein the protective element is made of a synthetic, elastic, impermeable and soft material.

14. (new) A application according to claim 13, wherein the protective element is made of a silicone or solid gel.

15. (new) An application according to claim 12, wherein the cap has a closed end, and an internal reinforcement of the cap is provided at the closed end.

16. (new) An application according to claim 15, wherein the internal reinforcement is made of the same material as the cap.